

# A new race of Green-headed Oriole from Southern Moçambique

by H. E. Wolters and P. A. Clancey

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Included in a small collection of birds recently made for the Zoologisches Museum Alexander Koenig, at Bonn, by Mr. M. O. E. Baddeley on Gorongoza Mountain, in southern Moçambique, was a single female of *Oriolus chlorocephalus*, differing from both hitherto known subspecies, viz., *O. c. chlorocephalus* Shelley, 1896 and *O. c. amani* Benson, 1946 by a white alar speculum formed by bold white tipping to the primary coverts. At about the same time the Durban Museum received a larger collection from the same locality, also made by Mr. Baddeley, among which there were another six specimens (4 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀) of *Oriolus chlorocephalus*, a species not previously found south of Malawi, where the nominate race inhabits the mountains east of the Shiré valley. They agreed with the specimen at Bonn in possessing a white wing patch, and since this is the most prominent character of the Gorongoza population of the Green-headed Oriole, we propose for it the name

*Oriolus chlorocephalus specularifer*, subsp. nov.

*Type*: ♀ ad., Gorongoza Mountain, Moçambique, 3,700 ft., in temperate forest, coll. by M. O. E. Baddeley, 25th October, 1968; Zool. Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, W. Germany, Reg. No. 68.2695. Wing 134 mm., tail 105, culmen 25, tarsus 26 mm.

*Paratypes*: 4 ♂♂, Durban Museum, Durban, South Africa, Reg. Nos. 24675, 24676, 24677, 24678; 2 ♀♀, Nos. 24680, 24681; all collected by M. O. E. Baddeley on Gorongoza Mountain, at 3,700 ft., 21st–24th October, 1968.

*Diagnosis*: Similar to *Oriolus chlorocephalus chlorocephalus* Shelley, 1896 and to *O. c. amani* Benson, 1946, but at once distinguished by a white alar speculum, formed by the distal parts of both webs of the inner (5th to 7th, numbered in ascending sequence) primary-coverts, which are white, as are the distal part of the inner web and the edge of the tip of the outer web of the 4th covert. Outer webs of inner primaries and outer secondaries finely edged with white towards and round their tips. On the average larger than *O. c. chlorocephalus* and decidedly larger than *O. c. amani*: wing of four males 138, 138, 142, 144 (av. 140.5) mm., while, according to Benson (1946) the nominate subspecies measures 133–141 (av. 136.3) mm. in six males; *O. c. amani* 123–134 mm. in eight males. Our three females have a wing-length of respectively 133.5, 133.5, 134 (av. 133.7) mm.; females of *O. c. chlorocephalus* measure 129–132 (av. of five specimens 130.4) mm., those of *O. c. amani* 123–126 mm.

*Material examined*: 1 ♀ (type), Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn; 4 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀ (paratypes), Durban Museum; all from Gorongoza Mountain, 3,700 ft. 4 ♂♂ of *O. c. amani*, from Uluguru Mts., Tanzania, Museum Alexander Koenig (wing 127.5–130 mm.).

*Distribution*: Only known from Gorongoza Mountain, Manica e Sofala, Moçambique. As shown by da Rosa Pinto (1959), the relationships of the avifauna of this mountain are with the mountains of northern Moçambique rather than with the surrounding highlands, and *Oriolus chlorocephalus specularifer* may be regarded as another example indicative of such avifaunal connections from across the Zambezi. On the other hand, it may well be that the new subspecies will be found in other forests on high ground in western Moçambique and perhaps in eastern Rhodesia.

*Remarks:* The gonads of three of the four males collected were well enlarged and two females showed an incubation spot.

References:

Benson, C. W. 1946. Two New Races of Larks from Southern Abyssinia, and a New Race of Green-headed Oriole from Tanganyika Territory. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 67: 25-28.  
da Rosa Pinto, A. A. 1959. Um esbôco da avifauna sedentária da região da Gorongoza, Mocambique. *Proc. First Pan-African Orn. Congr., Ostrich*, Suppl. no. 3: 98-125.

## *Corvus frugilegus* Linnaeus with fourteen rectrices

by R. E. Scott

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Birds with additional rectrices are occasionally described in the literature (e.g. De Roo, 1967) and it seems worth placing on record an example of a passerine with 14 tail feathers as opposed to the normal 12.

On 14th June, 1968, Mr. E. Carpenter trapped six adult Rooks *Corvus frugilegus* at Lydd, Kent for ringing by the Dungeness Bird Observatory. In addition to ringing, each bird was checked for moult on the remiges and



Photo: R. E. Scott

Rook with fourteen rectrices

rectrices; and although no moult was recorded, one individual was discovered to have 14 tail feathers. Although apparently normal in all other respects of structure, the bird's tail consisted of seven pairs of feathers, the extra feathers being the outermost and markedly shorter than the penultimate.

Reference:

De Roo, A. 1967. A Swift, *Apus a. apus*, with twelve rectrices. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 87: 141-142.